

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1-8 and add new claims 9-11 as follows. The claims and their status are shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) Process for preparing [[of]] maltitol enriched products, [[and]] said process [[is]] comprising the successive steps:

a) Obtaining syrup (A) containing at least 78%, ~~preferably more than 80%~~ of maltose based on dry substance,

b) Fractionating said syrup (A) chromatographically, wherein the process conditions of said fractionation are selected in order to obtain a fraction (B) rich in maltose, wherein said fraction (B) comprises ~~comprising~~ at least 92% maltose based on dry substance of fraction (B),

c) Hydrogenating catalytically fraction (B) to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ a liquid maltitol enriched product (C),

d) Increasing dry substance of liquid maltitol enriched product (C),

e) Optionally solidifying or crystallizing said liquid maltitol enriched product (C).

2. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1 characterised in that syrup (A) is obtained by liquefying starch milk to a dextrose equivalent of from 2 to 25 to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ liquefied starch milk and subjecting said liquefied starch milk to a saccharification step in the presence of β -amylase and at least one debranching enzyme selected from the group consisting of pullulanases, iso-amylases and mixtures thereof, and optionally followed by addition of α -amylase to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ a syrup (A) containing at least 81% of maltose based on dry substance.

3. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 1 [[or 2]] characterised in that fraction (B) comprises ~~is comprising~~ at least 93% maltose based on dry substance.

4. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim ~~anyone of claims~~ 1 [[to 3]] characterised in that product (C) comprises ~~is comprising~~ at least 90% maltitol.

5. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~anyone of~~ claim 1 [[to 3]] characterised in that step d) of said process is followed by the further successive steps of:

e) Crystallizing product (C) by one or multiple crystallization steps to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ crystalline maltitol intermediate (D) and liquid maltitol co-product (E), wherein

intermediate (D) has a dry substance of at least 93% and comprises ~~comprising~~ at least 97% maltitol based on dry substance, and

f) Drying crystalline maltitol intermediate (D) to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ crystalline maltitol product (F) of at least 98.5% dry substance and comprising at least 97% maltitol based on dry substance.

6. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim 5 characterized in that step f) of said process is followed by fractionating chromatographically the liquid maltitol co-product (E), wherein the process conditions of said fractionation are selected in order to obtain a fraction (G) rich in maltitol, said fraction comprising at least 90% maltitol based on dry substance.

7. (Currently Amended) A process according to claim [[5 or]] 6 characterized in that crystalline maltitol intermediate (D), co-product (E), and/or fraction (G) and optionally water are mixed to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ liquid maltitol product (H) containing at least 94% maltitol based on dry substance and having at least 50% dry substance.

8. (Currently Amended) A process according to ~~anyone of~~ claim 5 [[to 7]] characterized in that crystalline maltitol (F) has ~~is having~~ a purity of at least 98%, ~~preferably more than 99% purity, more preferably more than 99.5%.~~

9. (New) A process according to claim 1, wherein said syrup (A) obtained in step a) contains more than 80% of maltose based on dry substance.

10. (New) A process according to claim 5 characterized in that crystalline maltitol (F) has a purity of at least 99%.

11. (New) A process according to claim 5 characterized in that crystalline maltitol (F) has a purity of at least 99.5%.